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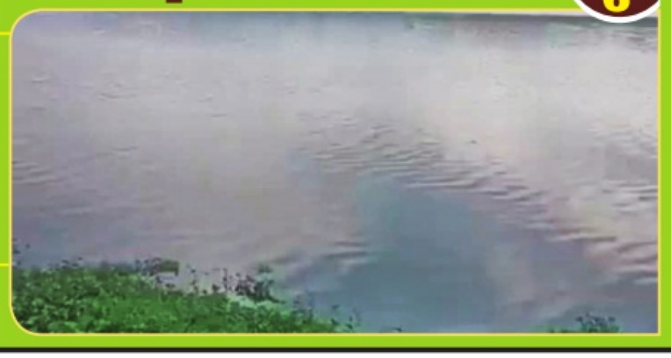
Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 28 | Min 18 | Humidity 87% Partly cloudy sky Sensex 78,472 | Nifty 23,727 | Gold 77,450 | Silver 91,500 | Dollar 85.20 | Euro 88.75 | GBP 106.78

Lake in despair

CITY PAGE 6

Madiwala Lake may be one of city's oldest and largest lakes, but it now lies neglected with overspilling dustbins, litter all around



Dog's life

CITY PAGE 9

BBMP's apathy towards providing proper infra for ABC centres called out after stray dog gets trapped in cage at one centre and dies

BBMP's forest dept has set aside Rs 2 crore to free trees from concrete on their bases; initiative to kick off in 2025 will also see removal of old, constricting metal guards

ROOT OF THE MATTER

Tender will be floated after Palike's budget is announced next year

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

KAUSHIK JN

Bengaluru's trees are a part and parcel of its identity — this time of the year, Tabebuia rosea trees paint the city pink

Seems like there has been some introspection after hundreds of trees came crashing down during rain in the city. The Forest Department of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has kept a budget of Rs 2 crore to remove concrete from the bases of avenue trees in the New Year.

The critical root zones of all trees in the city that have concrete up to their trunk, will be freed in a bid to preserve Bengaluru's green cover.

"While the campaign was introduced some time back, we could not take it up due to lack of funds. We have now decided to allocate Rs 2 crore for reviving the 'Free the Tree' campaign. It will be part of BBMP's upcoming budget and the initiative will be taken across the city. We will identify trees that need de-concretising and will clear the root area of concrete," said BLG Swamy, deputy conservator of forest, BBMP.

Under the initiative, the cylindrical metal tree guards that are suffocating many trees in the city will also be removed. Hundreds of fully grown trees across the city still have outgrown these metal guards years ago and these protecting coverings are now choking the trees.

A tender for the project will be floated after BBMP's budget is announced in the new year.

"We are starting with a budget of Rs 2 crore but it will get revised in case the need arises. We will call tenders for the project. Work will include de-concretising trees and installing water-percolation-friendly tiles around tree bases. Old metal guards will also be removed," added Swamy.

No breathing space

Officials say the initiative has been revived after hundreds of trees and branches in Bengaluru came tumbling down during the rainy season this year. According to the department, the main reason was a lack of breathing space and trees concretised up to their trunks. Swamy agrees that lack of water and nutrients due to concretized bases have made avenue trees weak and more often than not, roots have been decaying, leading to more than usual tree fall cases in the city.

Notably, in just a couple of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

> **Care should be taken in creating a sizable pit around the trunk, and good quality soil and compost should be added to help these tree gain back their health**
>
> —Dattatreya Devare, Bangalore Environment Trust

Auto fare unfair, say drivers

As discussions on fare revisions get under way, auto drivers say price rise is breaking their backs

Atiya Firdos
c-syeda.atiya@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Auto-rickshaw fares in Bengaluru are expected to rise by ₹5 to ₹10 from January, as discussions about fare revision are underway. A committee meeting initially scheduled for December 23 to finalise the revision was postponed due to unspecified reasons, delaying the decision-making process. Invitations to the meeting were extended to all city auto unions and organisations by the Additional Secretary of the Bengaluru Urban Regional Transport Authority.

Auto drivers are pressing for a hike in the minimum fare, citing surging costs of diesel, LPG, spare parts, and essential commodities. Currently, the minimum fare is ₹30 for the first two kilometres, with ₹15 charged for each subsequent kilometre. The drivers have proposed increasing these rates to ₹40 and ₹20, respectively. They have also submitted appeals to various ministers, seeking support for the fare hike.

Economic challenges for drivers

Bengaluru has over two lakh auto-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Condolence meet

A special condolence meet to honour the legendary Ustad Zakir Hussain. This gathering at IME will reflect on his extraordinary contributions to the world of music, share memories, and celebrate his unparalleled legacy.
Where: Indian Music Experience Museum, JP Nagar; When: December 26, 6:30 pm to 8 pm

02 Drawing session

Outreach event "Gesture Drawing: A Workshop on Drawing Motion with Minimal Strokes" for ages above 16 years in conjunction with the ongoing in-house curated retrospective exhibition 'Namma Mestru: The Artistic Voyage of JMS Mani.' **Where: National Gallery of Modern Art, Vasanth Nagar; When: December 28, 11 am to 1 pm**

03 New Year party

Celebrate this New Year with one of the largest brew pubs in Bengaluru with unlimited food & drinks and some captivating performances by fire dancers and a live DJ. **Where: All BLR Brewing Co outlets (Kanakapura, Whitefield, HSR, Electronic City); When: December 31, 8 pm onwards**

04 Musical healing

Music Based Wellness Workshop by Sunitha, Ketki & Siva- a fun, reflective musical program designed to spark self-discovery and celebration. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: December 29, 4 pm**

05 Art exhibition

Gallery Sumukha presents 'Me, Amma, We' by Devu Nenmara and Unnikrishnan C.
Where: Gallery Sumukha, BTS Depot Road, Wilson Garden; When: Until January 11, 2025, 10:30 am to 6 pm

Graceful debut

Amritha Vibha Koushik, a disciple of Guru Vidhushi Kamakshi, successfully completed her Rangapravesham at Ravindra Kalashetra on December 21. The event was graced by Dr SC Sharma, Dr S Ahalya, Dr VK Balasubranmyan, Nritya Kalanidhi Guru Vidhushi Vasundhara Sampath Kumar, Vidhushi Leelavathi Upadhyaya, Guru TS Nagaraja Upadhyaya and Sandya Sharma ET chief editor. During the performance, Amritha mesmerised the audience with her captivating dance, showcasing her graceful movements and deep understanding of the art form. The Rangapravesham was a resounding success, leaving a lasting impression on all who witnessed Amritha's talent and dedication. **— BMB**

Yuletide spirit
Devotees celebrate Christmas by participating in the holy mass and lighting candles at the Infant Jesus Church at Viveknagar on Wednesday

Result stuck, students' futures hang in balance

Technical education dept withholds diploma exam results of 350 polytechnic students, citing mismanagement in 26 private colleges, malpractices in admissions, attendance

Sridhar Vivan
sridhar.vivan
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @sridharvMirror

Hundreds of students in Karnataka are facing uncertainty regarding their future due to lapses by private polytechnic colleges. The Department of Technical Education (DTE) has withheld the diploma exam results of 350 students and denied 28 others the opportunity to appear for the exams. This action follows the failure of 26 private polytechnic colleges to secure admission approvals from the DTE, as required by regulations.

Warnings ignored repeatedly

Sources said that Karnataka is home to 102 government, 44 aided, and 196 private polytechnic colleges. Among them, 26 private institutions have failed to obtain the necessary admission approvals despite repeated warnings from the technical education department.

As a result, students enrolled in these institutions have been caught in a difficult situation. Parents and students had appealed to the department to allow students to take their exams, leading the DTE to permit 350 students to appear while withholding their results until compliance is ensured.

Conditions for release of results

An official said that the DTE has made it clear that results will be released only after the colleges in question obtain the required admission approvals. "If they fail to comply, colleges must provide valid reasons for the lapse, pay penalty fees, and submit a written undertaking assuring that such issues will not recur. Only after fulfilling these conditions will the department release the withheld results," the official said.

Concerns over malpractices

Meanwhile, the DTE has also raised concerns about malpractices in some private colleges. Allegations include granting admissions to students from other states or those with sufficient financial resources, providing attendance to students who rarely attend classes, and enabling them to pass exams through unethical means. Such practices have eroded trust in the system, with some students intentionally seeking admission in these colleges to exploit these loopholes.

What's the root cause?

Sources said that the problem stems from colleges admitting students without adhering to intake limits or securing timely approvals. The DTE grants admission approvals only after reviewing factors such as intake capacity and the number of students admitted. However, certain private colleges have flouted these norms, admitting students beyond their capacity and ignoring deadlines, leading to the current crisis.

> **"Colleges must pay penalties & provide written assurances to prevent such lapses in future. Until then, withheld results will not be released** – Official

"The DTE has reiterated that colleges must pay penalties and provide written assurances to prevent such lapses in the future. Until then, the withheld results will not be released, ensuring accountability and safeguarding the interests of students," an official added.

3 detained for egg attack on MLA Munirathna

Three people have been detained for throwing an egg at BJP MLA Munirathna during an event in Bengaluru on Wednesday, police said.

The MLA was participating in an event to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Nandini Layout in the city when miscreants threw an egg at him, a police officer said.

The MLA accused Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, his brother and former MP D K Suresh, and their confidantes of "orchestrating" the attack.

Munirathna was allegedly attacked while he was walking back after attending a public program with his associates near Kanteerva studio around 11.30 am. In a video, the MLA was seen immediately being surrounded by his associates and police to provide security.

According to the police, the eggs were thrown from the opposite side of the road, and the MLA was soon rushed to the hospital for medical check-up.

Protest staged

Soon after this incident, Munirathna and his associates staged a protest demanding strict action against the miscreants, accusing the ruling party for the attack.

"This was an attempt to kill me. Nearly 150 people were brought in to finish me. I would have been killed if my supporters and policemen were not present. D K Shivakumar, D K Suresh, Hanumantharayappa, and some others were involved," Munirathna alleged.

Shivakumar, who was in Belagavi, rejected the allegation, saying he was busy preparing for the centenary celebrations of the 1924 Indian National Congress session, which was presided over by Mahatma Gandhi.

Suresh also dismissed the charge, claiming that Munirathna was "threatening" Congress workers in his area.

He alleged that the MLA had staged the attack to divert public attention from the issue.

Karnataka Home Minister Parameshwara confirmed the arrests. "Three people have been arrested. The investigation is ongoing to identify who they are and why they did it," he told reporters.

BJP state president BY Vijayendra condemned the attack.

-BMB & agencies

A video grab of the incident where MLA Munirathna was attacked

Case of the vanishing hotel guests

Guests check out without clearing hotel bill amounting to Rs 14 lakh

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror
@timesofindia.com
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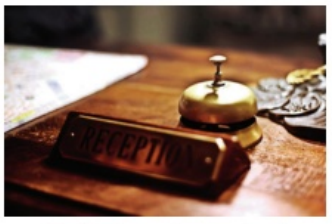

CRIME FILES

The High grounds police have registered a case against two individuals who fled without paying a hotel bill amounting to 14 lakh. According to the complaint filed by a hotel employee, the duo checked into the hotel on June 18 and later vacated, leaving their luggage behind.

All was in order when the accused, identified as 42-year-old Sanjeev Manjunath from Tamil Nadu and his companion Roshini Naudiyal from Navi Mumbai, first came to stay, but in July, they wrote to the hotel claiming financial difficulties and requested additional time to settle their dues. Despite their assurances, no payments were made.

The situation came to light when hotel staff inspected the room and discovered the guests had abruptly left, taking their personal documents but leaving their luggage behind. "Their phone numbers have been unreachable, and all attempts to contact them have been unsuccessful," said a police official.

Man killed in mysterious late-night accident

A man lost his life in a suspected hit-and-run, in the wee hours of Wednesday near Jamia Masjid, KR Market.

The deceased, identified as Chandraraju, a resident of Ambedkar Nagar, was riding his two-wheeler when the accident took place between 2 and 3 am. According to a complaint filed by his wife, Chandraraju may have either lost control of his vehicle or been hit by an unknown speeding vehicle.

Preliminary investigations suggest the involvement of an unidentified vehicle, which fled the scene following the incident. Chandraraju sustained severe injuries and succumbed at the spot.

The City Market Traffic Police have registered a case under Sections 187 of the Indian Motor Vehicle Act and have launched an investigation to identify the vehicle and driver responsible for the accident.

Traffic police officials said that they are analysing CCTV footage from the vicinity to trace the accused.

Gas explosion injures three

A gas leak accident occurred early on Wednesday around 6.30 am at a house under the Sriramapura Police Station limits, leaving three family members critically injured.

According to police, the accident happened shortly after the family woke up. The husband, a labourer, had left for work earlier. THe wife, unaware of a gas leak, attempted to light the stove. Usually the husband or daughter helps her to get the stove lit. The resulting explosion caused severe injuries to the woman and their daughter and son.

All three victims were rushed to Victoria Hospital, where doctors reported that they sustained major burns and injuries. Medical professionals have stated there is a 40% chance of recovery and the next 48 hours are crucial.

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Private player's bus shuttle plans cause flutter in B'luru

Commuters say transportation company may help fill gaps in services, but activists say more BMTC buses better option for easier commutes

Rachana Ramesh
c-rachana.ramesh
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

With a proposal to deploy 200 buses with air conditioning along Bengaluru's technology corridor situated on the Outer Ring Road (ORR), among others, transportation company Uber is in discussions with Karnataka government authorities to obtain necessary permits for launching their shuttle bus operations in Bengaluru, following their successful implementation in Kolkata and Delhi.

This initiative aims to ease traffic congestion by providing office-goers an alternative to private vehicles. The planned shuttle service would operate with frequent intervals of 2-3 minutes. Commuters would have the facility to reserve seats in advance, board from specified pickup points and disembark at their chosen destinations.

Mixed response

The move has garnered varying responses, with many anxious about the potential introduction of a private player, breaking the present monopoly of bus service held by the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) across the city. On the other hand, commuters are also of the opinion that Uber must be allowed to fill gaps that are currently bearing heavy burdens on bus users.

Shaheen Shasa from Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike (BBPV) told Bangalore Mirror that services like these will be naturally profit-orientated and hence only serve limited pockets with high demand and paying capacity. On the repercussions, she said, "This will directly affect BMTC ridership and revenue in high-demand areas and limit BMTC's ability to serve the wider public. In the long run, weakening BMTC and limiting its scope will be bad for public transport in the city. The government must focus on a policy of bus priority—urgently implement bus priority lanes on all arterial roads and traffic planning that prioritises the movement of buses. This will make bus travel faster and more convenient."

'B'luru needs more BMTC buses'

She further added, "BMTC must have enough buses to flood the city, so to speak, so that people find it easy to use it anywhere in the city. This is what Bengaluru needs. Anything else is patchwork and will not serve the larger public interest."

Disruption to local economy

Radhakrishna Holla, from Karnataka State Travel Operators Association (KSTOA), said that private operators function by obtaining permits, such as the Private Service Vehicle (PSV) permit, which allows the plying of buses only on designated routes to ferry employees of specific companies. We often receive three-year contracts from companies—after which a vehicle is purchased and branded according to the company's needs. The introduction of a competitive multinational company will disrupt this local economy. What has happened with the earnings of auto rickshaw drivers after the introduction of bike taxis is likely to happen to bus operators if the move is made."

Holla noted that bus operators already face competition with the BMTC, as it has been consistently introducing new buses on the ORR route and a metro line is to eventually come up in the area. "It is the responsibility of the transport department to ensure permit holders are able to conduct their business without any hindrance," he said, highlighting that the number of passengers received by private operators may be severely affected if Uber makes its way, as they have the ability to introduce predatory pricing and incentives to increase their customer base.

Meanwhile, Uber showcased their shuttle bus service at last month's Bengaluru Tech Summit to build community backing. During the event, they presented their operational model to IT BT Minister Priyank Kharge and other attendees to seek endorsement. Currently, the organisation is waiting for official approval to launch their services.

'Reach of BMTC buses all over the city—this is what Bengaluru needs'

> **"What has happened with earnings of auto drivers after introduction of bike taxis is likely to happen to bus operators if this move is made**
> – Radhakrishna Holla, KSTOA

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Clear the debris

Shivajinagar

The stretch opposite Raju Puttur Hospital in Shivajinagar remains neglected, raising concerns about hygiene and safety. Residents are grappling with unsanitary conditions as garbage and mud have been lying uncleared on the street for over a month.

Walking hazard

Gandhinagar 6th Cross

A broken cement slab on a cable box located in the middle of Gandhinagar 6th Cross, near the Majestic area, poses a serious hazard to commuters and pedestrians. Immediate action is needed to prevent potential accidents.

Citizen group submits memo seeking better infra on Inner Ring Road

Iffath Fathima
iffath.fathima@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A memorandum addressing pressing concerns for installing missing bus stops, cleaning construction debris, improving street lighting, and expediting the Ejipura Flyover construction along the Inner Ring Road (IRR) was submitted to the Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy. The primary focus of the memorandum was the installation of eight missing bus stops along the 7.5-km stretch of IRR between Indiranagar and Koramangala.

According to Bangalore Political Action Committee (B.PAC), six bus stops in the East Zone have already undergone joint inspections by Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Technical Engineering Cell (TEC), Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP), Signpost (the agency), and B.PAC. However, a second inspection is needed to finalise the locations and initiate construction. The missing bus stops include key areas such as Indiranagar 12th Main (towards Koramangala and towards Indiranagar), New Horizon, Dhoopanahalli, Domlur Flyover, & Sony World (towards Koramangala), Madiwala Masjid & EGL/DELL (towards Indiranagar).

The memorandum was submitted by B.PAC CEO and Managing Trustee Revathy Ashok. "The lack of proper bus shelters affects thousands of daily commuters, including students and working professionals. Timely installation of these shelters will enhance accessibility and safety," she said.

Additionally, the memorandum urged the minister to expedite the long-delayed construction of the Ejipura flyover. The incomplete flyover has caused severe traffic congestion and air pollution due to dust, with minimal progress observed on-site despite years of follow-up.

"The transport minister has assured us of the speedy completion of the Ejipura Flyover by December 2025 and assured us of his personal follow-up. We further did an extensive site inspection with the contractor, who assured us of the clearance of another 20% of debris, garbage and scaffolding lying on the road under the flyover before Sankranti," Ashok said, adding that B.PAC will continue to closely monitor the progress of this high-profile, long-delayed project completion.

The memorandum also highlighted the ongoing issue of construction debris and garbage along IRR. Despite the clearance of over 2,400 tonnes of construction debris and 46.5 tonnes of garbage, significant waste remains, particularly disintegrated plastic and mixed soil that have been lying unattended for seven years.

Street lighting was another critical concern raised during the meeting. It was noted that dark patches near Defence Land, Kendriya Sadan, and St John's Hospital continue to pose safety risks for pedestrians and encourage illegal garbage dumping. While temporary lights have been installed near the Ejipura signal, more permanent solutions are required for the entire stretch.

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Bank may divert deposits towards loan

Fixed deposits that bank transferred to loan account need not be returned to customer as bank has lien rights, rules HC

Rachana Ramesh
c-rachana.ramesh@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

The Karnataka High Court overturned a single judge's order that had instructed Union Bank of India to release Term Deposits which were allocated towards a businessman's loan, exercising its general lien rights over these deposits.

A division bench comprising Justice SG Pandit and Justice Ramachandra D Huddar upheld the Bank's appeal, reversing the order from May 2, 2023. The bench stated: "It is observed in the impugned order in writ petition that, because of issuance of recovery certificate by the DRT the term deposits belonging to the petitioners are crystallised. But when the bank has got general lien over such deposits which is dealing in public money and has exercised its general lien as per the undertaking given by the father of the petitioners as well as now the petitioners the question of releasing the said deposit to the petitioners does not arise. Therefore, the appellants (Bank) have made out grounds to interfere with the impugned judgment."

Case context

V Harish D Kamath, children of deceased Devadas S Kamath, contested the bank's endorsement exercising general lien over fixed deposits in Kamath's name, transferred to cover the loan account of Sheshashayana Enterprises on March 31, 2016.

The petitioners argued that since the boat (against which they had got the loan) was insured, the Bank should have approached the Insurance Company and borrower. They contended that despite having alternative recovery options, the Bank shouldn't have exercised its lien. The bank defended its position, stating the

lien exercise was lawful as the petitioners' father had provided written consent for the Fixed Deposits to be used towards the loan if the primary borrower defaulted. The Single Judge erroneously allowed the writ petition, invalidated the endorsement, and ordered the Bank to release the Term Deposits.

Court's Analysis

Citing Section 171 of the Contract Act, the court affirmed that banks can retain goods as security for account balance, barring contrary agreements.

The court noted that the petitioners' father had offered his Term Deposit as security for M/s. Sheshashayana Enterprises, and after his death, one petitioner agreed in 1990 to settle the loan through Term Deposits. Examining communications between parties, the court observed the petitioners' agreement not to withdraw deposits until the Borrower's liability was fully settled with interest.

The court stated: "These series of documents produced along with the appeal memo by the appellants-Bank do establish that the petitioners' father as well as the petitioners have expressed their willingness to adjust the Term Deposits by executing such documents."

Dismissing the insurance recovery argument, the court ruled: "Bank has obtained the certificate of recovery from the DRT, issued under Sub-Section 7 and 22 of Section 19 of the Recovery Debts Due to the Banks and Financial Institution Act, 1993. The recovery certificate was issued on December 22, 2017 after adjustment of term deposit towards the loan raised by Sheshashayana Enterprises." The court concluded: "Therefore, now the petitioners cannot contend that the Bank ought to have executed the recovery certificate against Sheshashayana Enterprises and other guarantors." The appeal was consequently allowed.

Action against drug units making nutraceuticals stayed

The Karnataka High Court has issued a directive to the government, preventing any action against companies that produce nutraceuticals in drug-licensed facilities until the next court session, offering significant protection to the pharmaceutical sector. The latest Schedule M regulations propose to completely prohibit the production of any items other than drugs within the same manufacturing facility.

"Till the next date of hearing, the respondents shall not take any precipitative action against the petitioner in so far as it relates to manufacturing of nutraceuticals within the drug manufacturing premises," the court said. Federation of Pharma Enterprises (FoPE), representing small and medium-scale pharmaceutical companies, alongside Karnataka Drugs and Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association and other entities, challenged Schedule M in court, saying establishing separate facilities for cosmetic production is unfeasible. Their sought permission to make nutraceuticals in areas designated for topical products such as creams or lotions.

"The petitioner's apprehension that pending consideration to examine the matter of manufacturing of nutraceuticals within the drug manufacturing facility, the respondents are likely to take precipitative action," the court said. The government had announced enforcement measures against pharmaceutical units that violate regulations by making nutraceuticals in shared facilities.

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and Brothers and their families

Programme: Punyaha Vachana : 11.30am | Lunch : 12.30pm

Madiwala Lake in shambles, citizens call for urgent action

Lake with rich history now remains neglected with poor maintenance, litter scattered all around

Iffath Fathima
iffath.fathima
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Madiwala Lake, one of the city's oldest and largest water bodies, is in a dire state of neglect, leaving concerned citizens deeply disappointed. Once a serene spot managed efficiently by the Forest Department, the lake has now become a glaring example of poor maintenance, with overflowing dustbins, broken infrastructure, and widespread litter.

On a recent plogging activity organised by volunteers, citizens were appalled by the amount of garbage strewn across the lake premises. "We found over 150 plastic bottles and collected three large sacks of litter within just a kilometre stretch inside the lake. Disposable paper cups, biscuit wrappers, and chocolate packets were scattered everywhere," said Raj from Ploggers Army, a community known for its cleanup drives across the city.

The sight of overflowing bins, some of which were damaged, painted a grim picture of the lake's condition. Raj said, "It's almost a year since the tender for lake maintenance has been pending. The situation is alarming, and it's high time for action."

During their visit, the volunteers interacted with the lake's security personnel, who expressed gratitude for the ploggers' efforts but lamented the lack of support from authorities. "When the Forest Department managed the lake, it was maintained so well. Now, it seems like no one is taking responsibility. When there is a system failure, I think the local community should rise up to own the place and keep it clean," said Bharatt, another member of Polggers Army.

Madivala Lake; (inset) one of the overspilling dustbins lying around in the lake's vicinity

"It's disheartening to see Madivala Lake in dire state of neglect. Both authorities & citizens must take collective responsibility to restore it
–Raj, member of Ploggers Army

From cherished to neglected

Once a haven for biodiversity and a cherished public space for residents, Madiwala Lake now struggles to retain its former glory. The absence of regular maintenance has resulted in the degradation of this vital ecosystem. Besides impacting wildlife, the deteriorating condition of the lake also reflects poorly on the civic sense of the city's residents, as seen in the rampant littering.

The lake is said to be a source of drinking water until the early 1990s. However, much of the sewage waste has since contaminated it, rendering the water unfit for consumption. It is also said to be a place for 100 migratory species of birds; moreover, many butterflies and insects have been spotted here over the years.

Local resident groups and environmental activists are now urging the BBMP and other stakeholders to take immediate steps to revive the lake. "It's disheartening to see such neglect for a lake that holds historical and ecological significance. Both the authorities and the citizens must take collective responsibility to restore it," added Raj.

Heartfelt thanks to eye donors' kin

Lions PS Premnath, Managing Trustee of the Lions International Eye Bank, has issued a statement expressing gratitude to the donor families who donated the eyes of their near and dear ones after death. "We extend our heartfelt thanks to the families who, in their time of loss, chose to donate the eyes of their loved ones. Our best wishes go out to the corneal recipients, their families, and the eye banks," the statement by Lions International Eye Bank read.

4 of family killed in road accident

Four members of a family died in an accident after the car they were travelling in allegedly collided with another vehicle near the Haveri-Dharwad border on the highway on Wednesday, police said. The accident occurred within the Tadas police station limits near Belligatti village in Timmapur, close to the Haveri-Dharwad border.

According to the police, the incident took place when an SUV, heading towards Hubballi, lost control, jumped the road divider, and collided with a car coming from Hubballi and heading towards Bengaluru. The car had four occupants, including an 11-year-old child. All of them died in the accident, a senior police officer said. Two people died on the spot, while the other two were declared dead at KIMS Hospital in Hubballi. The deceased have been identified as Chandramma (59) of Chamarajpet in Bengaluru, her daughter Meena (38), son-in-law Mahesh Kumar C (41), and grandson Dhanaveer (11), all residents of Harihar in Davanagere district. A case has been registered, police said, adding that three people travelling in the SUV fled the scene after the accident. –PTI

Cutting corners on vehicle taxes? Prepare for hefty penalties

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

Are you surprised to see buses with registration from Arunachal Pradesh, trucks with Nagaland registration, and luxury cars with Puducherry registration in the city? Well, it is alleged that to avoid paying hefty taxes, many vehicle owners, including luxury car buyers in Karnataka, are registering their vehicles in regions where the tax rates are comparatively lower, resulting in significant revenue loss for the state's transport department.

Thetransport department, a major contributor to the state's revenue, earns millions through lifetime taxes collected during the registration of new vehicles. Sources said that in Karnataka, the lifetime tax is calculated based on the vehicle's value. For cars priced up to Rs 5 lakh, the tax is 13%, increasing to 14% for vehicles valued between 5 lakh and 10 lakh, 17% for those between 10 lakh and 20 lakh, and 18% for vehicles priced above 20 lakh. Electric vehicles priced over 25 lakh are taxed at 10%.

In comparison, some Union Territories and states have much lower rates, with certain regions setting fixed rates based on the vehicle model rather than its price, making them attractive for registration.

Officials impose penalties to curb tax evasion

Officials said that Puducherry has emerged as a favoured destination for such tax evasion, with a lifetime tax as low as 5%. "It is noted that many buyers use fake local addresses to purchase and register luxury vehicles. The transport department has taken serious note of these practices and launched special operations to identify vehicles with out-of-state or UT registrations. Authorities are imposing penalties on violators to ensure compliance with re-registration rules and safeguard the state's revenue. This growing issue has prompted the department to intensify its efforts to curb tax evasion and bring defaulters under the tax net, reinforcing the importance of adherence to the law and protecting Karnataka's financial interests," added an official.

'In K'taka, the lifetime tax is calculated based on the vehicle's value'

Bengaluru has over 5K such luxury vehicles

Officials said that Bengaluru, in particular, has seen a surge in such practices, where buyers purchase luxury cars in UTs, register them locally, and then bring them back to Karnataka for use. These vehicles often bypass the state's mandatory re-registration requirement, which states that vehicles brought into Karnataka must be re-registered within 12 months, with the applicable lifetime tax paid.

"While owners are eligible for a refund of the tax paid in the original state or UT, many luxury car owners fail to re-register their cars even after the deadline. Reports show that over 5,000 luxury vehicles in Bengaluru are operating without proper re-registration, depriving state of substantial revenue," said an official.

HEALTH TIP: Leave your phone behind and venture outdoors for a refreshing 20-minute stroll in the sunlight

Journaling serves as a therapeutic outlet for expressing and processing our thoughts and emotions

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PEERING INTO SPACE

From dead galaxies to mysterious red dots, what the James Webb telescope found

The Crab Nebula, the result of a bright supernova explosion seen by Chinese and other astronomers in the year 1054, 6,500 light-years from Earth, is seen in an image taken by the James Webb Telescope on June 3, 2024

On this day three years ago, we witnessed the nail-biting launch of the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), the largest and most powerful telescope humans have ever sent into space.

It took 30 years to build, but in three short years of operation, JWST has already revolutionised our view of the cosmos.

It's explored our own Solar System, studied the atmospheres of distant planets in search of signs of life and probed the farthest depths to find the very first stars and galaxies formed in the universe. Here's what JWST has taught us about the early universe since its launch – and the new mysteries it has uncovered.

Eerie blue monsters

JWST has pushed the boundary of how far we can look into the universe to find the first stars and galaxies. With Earth's atmosphere out of the way, its location in space makes for perfect conditions to peer into the depths of the cosmos with infrared light.

The current record for the most distant galaxy confirmed by JWST dates back to a time when the universe was only about 300 million years old. Surprisingly, within this short time window, this galaxy managed to form about 400 million times the mass of our Sun. This indicates star formation in the early universe was extremely efficient. And this galaxy is not the only one.

When galaxies grow, their stars explode, creating dust. The bigger the galaxy, the more dust it has. This dust makes galaxies appear red because it absorbs the blue light. But here's the catch: JWST has shown these first galaxies to be shockingly bright, massive and very blue, with no sign of any dust. That's a real puzzle.

There are many theories to explain the weird nature of these first galaxies. Do they have huge stars that just collapse due to gravity without undergoing massive supernova explosions? Or do they have such large explosions that all dust is pushed away far from the galaxy, exposing a blue, dust-free core? Perhaps the dust is destroyed due to the intense radiation from these early exotic stars – we just don't know yet.

Unusual chemistry in early galaxies

The early stars were the key building blocks of what eventually became life. The universe began with only hydrogen, helium and a small amount of lithium. All other elements, from the calcium in our bones to the oxygen in the air we breathe, were forged in the cores of these stars.

JWST has discovered that early galaxies also have unusual chemical features.

They contain a significant amount of nitrogen, far more than what we observe in our Sun, while most other metals are present in lower quantities. This suggests there were processes at play in the early universe we don't yet fully understand.

JWST has shown our models of how stars drive the chemical evolution of galaxies are still incomplete, meaning we still don't fully understand the conditions that led to our existence.

Spiral galaxy NGC 628, located 32 million light-years away from Earth, is seen in an image from the James Webb Space Telescope

Small things that ended the cosmic dark arges

Using massive clusters of galaxies as gigantic magnifying glasses, JWST's sensitive cameras can also peer deep into the cosmos to find the faintest galaxies.

We pushed further to find the point at which galaxies become so faint, they stop forming stars altogether. This helps us understand the conditions under which galaxy formation comes to an end.

JWST is yet to find this limit. However, it has uncovered many faint galaxies, far more than anticipated, emitting over four times the energetic photons (light particles) we expected. The discovery suggests these small galaxies may have played a crucial role in ending the cosmic "dark ages" not long after the Big Bang.

The mysterious case of the little red dots

The very first images of JWST resulted in another dramatic, unexpected discovery. The early universe is inhabited by an abundance of "little red dots": extremely compact red colour sources of unknown origin.

Initially, they were thought to be massive super-dense galaxies that shouldn't be possible, but detailed observations in the past year have revealed a combination of deeply puzzling and contradictory properties.

Bright hydrogen gas is emitting light at enormous speeds, thousands of kilometres per second, characteristic of gas swirling around a supermassive black hole. This phenomenon, called an active galactic nucleus, usually indicates a feeding frenzy where a supermassive black hole is gobbling up all the gas around it, growing rapidly.

But these are not your garden variety active galactic nuclei. For starters: they don't emit any detectable X-rays, as is normally expected. Even more intriguingly, they seem to have the features of star populations.

Could these galaxies be both stars and active galactic nuclei at the same time? Or some evolutionary stage in between? Whatever they are, the little red dots are probably going to teach us something about the birth of both supermassive black holes and stars in galaxies.

The impossibly early galaxies

As well as extremely lively early galaxies, JWST has also found extremely dead corpses: galaxies in the early universe that are relics of intense star formation at cosmic dawn.

These corpses had been found by Hubble and ground-based telescopes, but only JWST had the power to dissect their light to reveal how long they've been dead. It has uncovered some extremely massive galaxies (as massive as our Milky Way today and more) that formed in the first 700 million years of cosmic history. Our current galaxy formation models can't explain these objects – they are too big and formed too early.

Cosmologists are still debating whether the models can be bent to fit (for example, maybe early star formation was extremely efficient) or whether we have to reconsider the nature of dark matter and how it gives rise to early collapsing objects. JWST will turn up many more of these objects in the next year and study the existing ones in greater detail. Either way, we will know soon.

What's next for JWST?

Just within its first steps, the telescope has revealed many shortcomings of our current models of the universe. While we are refining our models to account for the updates JWST has brought us, we are most excited about the unknown unknowns.

The mysterious red dots were hiding from our view. What else is lingering in the depths of cosmos? JWST will soon tell us.

(By Themiya Nanayakkara, Ivo Labbe, and Karl Glazebrook, Swinburne University of Technology, The Conversation)

All you need to know about...

Contour & bronzer

Difference between the two
While both the contour and bronzer are essentially used to add dimension to the face by using the concept of light and shadow, technically there is a big difference between the two.

What is contouring?
Contouring is a technique used to create an illusion of well-defined features. Without depth and symmetry the face would end up looking flat and dull. There are plenty of contour formulas to choose from, but what is key to remember is that the contour shade should be matte and not too warm.

What is a bronzer?
A bronzer, on the other hand, adds warmth to the face. Whenever I think of a bronzer it reminds me of a beach vacation – tanned skin effect and a natural wash of colour on the face. As such, a bronzer should always have an underlying warm tone to get that desired effect. An ideal bronzing powder could be matte or something with a soft shimmer. It is best to avoid bronzers that appear too red toned, especially for our Indian skin tone. They might come across as too dramatic and intense.

What to use when?
Despite the technical differences, I like to sometimes use a bronzer to add warmth to the face while also sculpting and enhancing the features. Bronzing and blush application done right can give a beautiful satin sun-kissed look which has been trending globally thanks to international makeup and fashion icons like Kim Kardashian and Hailey Bieber.

—Sneha Ramesh, Makeup Artist and Founder of Blush Lounge for Femina

Woman kills her kids, dies by suicide in KGF

A 38-year-old woman allegedly died by suicide after killing her two children in the KGF taluk on Wednesday, police said.

The woman has been identified as Thipamma, a homemaker, they said. The woman and her husband have been married for 20 years and shared a strained relationship.

A marital dispute between the couple is suspected to have triggered the drastic step.

A police officer said the woman allegedly first killed her children—a seven-year-old daughter and a four-year-old son.

The bodies were discovered by her husband, who then informed the police, he said. —PTI

Shivarajkumar in US: Surgery successful, say docs

Kannada film actor Shivarajkumar has got his cancerous bladder removed in a Miami-based hospital in the US after surgery, the surgeon who performed the operation on him said in a video message.

Dr Murugesh Manoharan also said that an artificial bladder was created using the actor's intestine.

The surgeon was seen in the video with Karnataka Primary and Secondary Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa and Shivarajkumar's wife Geetha. Geetha is Bangarappa's sister.

Later, the actor's family shared a press release stating, "We are pleased to share an update regarding Shivarajkumar's recent medical procedure. The surgery performed earlier on Wednesday was successful and we are glad to report that Shivarajkumar is now in stable condition and recovering well."

Manoharan confirmed that the surgery was a success and stated that Shivarajkumar's vitals remained stable throughout the operation and during post-operative care.

The actor is currently under observation to ensure his continued recovery and well-being, receiving exceptional care from a dedicated team of highly skilled doctors and medical staff, the statement said.

The family also extended their gratitude to Shivarajkumar's fans, colleagues and well-wishers for their steadfast support and prayers. Further updates regarding the actor's recovery will be shared in due course, they added.

Shivarajkumar is the eldest son of Kannada matinee idol Rajkumar. He is the eldest among the three actor brothers, Puneeth Rajkumar and Raghavendra Rajkumar.

He has acted in more than 125 Kannada movies. He made his debut in the silver screen with the movie 'Srinivasana Kalyana' in 1974.

He made a mark with movies such as 'Janumada Jodi', 'Jogi', 'Anand', 'Ratha Sapthami', 'Nammoora Mandara Hoove', 'Om' and 'Chigurida Kanasu'. —PTI

Your Connect

personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MADANLAL S/o LUNIDARAM HINDUJA R/at Flat NO.8C, Golf Link Apartment, Gunningham Road, Bengaluru- 560001 have changed my name to MADANLAL HINDUJA vide affidavit dated: 19/12/2024 Before Notary K.V.Mani Bangalore.

I, Siddharth Sahay S/o Rakesh Brijnandan Sahay R/o SLS Sunflower, Marathahalli, Bengaluru has changed my name from Siddharth Rakesh Sahay to Siddharth Sahay vide affidavit Dt: 24/12/2024 sworn before notary K.V Mani, Bengaluru.

I, Shujal Singh , Sujal Kumar S/O, Jyotshna Kumari R/o 211, Gurupriya Kiran Apartment, 20th Main, Btm 4th Stage, Bangalore-560076 have changed my name to Shreyash Raj for all purposes.

I Ankit Doshi S/O, Praveen Doshi R/o No A 1502 Mulberry Tower 3 Park West Near Eta Mall Bangalore North 560023 have changed my name to Ankit P Doshi.

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Concrete action for city's trees

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

days of rain in October this year BBMP received thousands of complaints of uprooted trees and fallen branches from eight city zones.

Give basic treatment too

City-based tree activists say that apart from de-concretising tree bases and removing metal guards, BBMP, under the initiative, should also consider providing basic treatment to avenue trees that are infected and nurture weak, infected trees with nutrients, and medicines to tackle pests.

"We noticed that three avenue trees on the stretch were slowly decaying. They are infected by termites and stem borers. We recently treated seven trees in Indiranagar and also came across a big avenue tree that has become hollow due to infection and lack of nutrients. Many of these infected trees can be revived and prevented from falling if they receive treatment in time. While de-concretising tree bases is a welcome step, care should be taken in creating a sizable pit around the trunk, and good quality soil and compost should be added to help these tree gain back their health," said Dattatreya Devare, one of the volunteers and trustee of Bangalore Environment Trust.

In addition to this, the department also plans to plant one lakh avenue trees.

Hundreds of trees and branches fell during heavy spells of rain earlier this year in the city

Drivers propose ₹40 as minimum fare

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

rickshaws serving millions of commuters, with approximately 10 lakh people relying on auto-driving for their livelihood. The rising price of LPG, which currently stands at ₹61.56 per kg, along with increased costs of spare parts, tires, and other essentials, has placed auto drivers under severe financial strain.

Rudramurthy, General Secretary of the Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union, emphasised that the delay in revising fares is worsening the economic challenges faced by drivers. He noted that while cities like Shivamogga and Mangaluru revised fares in 2023, Bengaluru's last significant hike before 2021 was in 2013.

Based on the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) fair compensation for drivers should be ensured and the sustainability of urban transport. "While we have submitted our demands to the State Transport Authority, we are still waiting for their response. The authority fixes fares after discussions with auto drivers, so it is crucial they consider our concerns. However, it remains to be seen what action they will take," said Rudramurthy.

The last fare revision was in 2021, setting the minimum fare at ₹30 and ₹15 per kilometre thereafter. Although this revision was intended to last two years, three years have passed without further adjustments. Additionally, the unregulated operation of bike taxis without proper licences has further impacted the income of auto drivers, they said.

BBMP's apathy called out after stray dog's death at ABC centre

Animal activists say poor infra at centres is posing grave harm to city's streeties

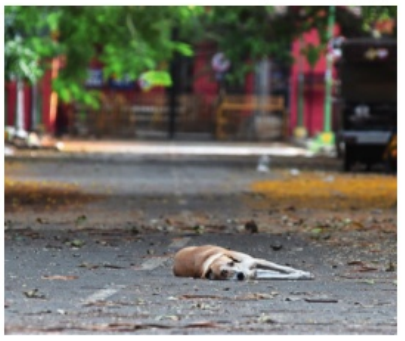
Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Hulimavu police have registered a first information report (FIR) against a person working for the Veterinary Society for Animal Welfare and Rural Development (VSAWRD) for the death of a stray dog that was brought to the ABC centre. The VSAWRD is a non-profit organisation affiliated with the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to vaccinate and sterilise stray dogs.

Hulimavu police, based on a complaint lodged by Bhavani MM, veterinary inspector, Bommanahalli Zone of the BBMP, registered the FIR under Section 325 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. According to the complaint, Mastan of VSAWRD brought a street dog from Anjanapura on December 18 and got it sterilised on the same day. However, the dog was found dead at 6.30 am on December 20 when its neck got stuck between the grills of the cage kept at the ABC centre.

Animal activists are up in arms against the negligence of people working at the ABC centre. Arun Prasad, an animal activist, said the kennel provided should have a door or gate with vertical iron bars and the gaps between adjacent bars shall be no more than two inches and adequate roofing is necessary to provide shade and shelter from inclement weather and also to prevent the dogs from escaping.

"An inquiry needs to be initiated by the Chief Secretary as Supreme Court orders, ABC Rules 2023 and AWBI ABC SOP



"The deplorable state of the Bommanahalli ABC centre has been ignored by the BBMP for too long – Sujaya Jagadish, SPCA

are neglected by both BBMP and the ABC NGO and action must be taken as per law. We have already brought to the notice of the Chief Secretary regarding the non implementation of the apex court orders in Karnataka," Arun Prasad said.

Stating that the BBMP's continued negligence has led to several deaths of street dogs due to unacceptable conditions in ABC centres across most zones, violating AWBI norms, Sujaya Jagadish, a member of SPCA, said that despite repeated warnings, Special Commissioner Vikas Suralkar penalised the NGO, VSAWRD, for the recent death of a street dog taken for surgery, rather than addressing the issue of the poor infrastructure provided by the BBMP. "The deplorable state of the Bommanahalli ABC centre has been ignored by the BBMP for far too long. Furthermore, the unnecessary demolition of the Koramangala ABC Centre/Pound in the recent past by BBMP has exacerbated the acute shortage of ABC centres in Bengaluru. It is imperative to hold BBMP accountable for this tragic death and demand immediate action to rectify the situation," said Jagadish.

Nevina Kamath, Secretary, Action for Animal Justice, said that on August 1, 2024, AWBI had sent a Notice to DC Urban seeking information as to how ABC NGOs are allowed to function in the city without AWBI recognition, and individual projects being given to them without the mandatory project recognition.

"There were no remedial measures by the BBMP to this notice, and no compliance in spite of bringing it to the attention of the BBMP Commissioner repeatedly. Their whole mantra was that ABC cannot stop for even a single day. So today, by running ABC projects out of highly inadequate centres having no approval by AWBI, we have an end result like this. Being in violation of so many norms in the basic infrastructure requirements, how is it that both NGOs as well as BBMP have joined hands in carrying on with ABC projects?" asked Kamath.

She said that how is it that a few persons are trying to fix the blame squarely on the NGO for the recent issue while BBMP Commissioner goes scot free, whose duty it was to provide the requisite facilities in the first place. "Failure to identify proper space and create adequate facilities for a Public Health and Safety program like ABC in just eight zones smacks of sheer dereliction of duty as well as appalling disinterest," she said.

Inspector suspended for allowing BJP leaders in police station during CT Ravi's arrest

"The political leaders barged inside the police station. This created confusion
– IGP Vikash Kumar

The Karnataka Police on Wednesday suspended the Inspector of Khanapur Police Station in Belagavi on the charges of violating the superior officers' orders by letting BJP leaders inside the police station during MLC CT Ravi's (pic) arrest.

IGP (Northern Range) Vikash Kumar Vikash has issued the order of suspension in this regard. "On December 19, BJP MLC CT Ravi was shifted to Khanapur Police Station from the Hirebagewadi Police Station. Strict instructions were given not to allow anyone inside the station. It was also instructed to arrange security with available staff of the police station," the IGP stated.

"Police Inspector Manjunath Nayak had not made proper security arrangements. The political leaders barged inside the police station. This had created confusion on the premises of the police station. He had failed to prevent the entry of political leaders," the IGP said. The IGP said that a suspension order is issued for violating the orders from superior officers, dereliction of duty, negligence and irresponsible behaviour by the officer.

Meanwhile, the development has taken a political turn with the BJP, Dalit and pro-Kannada organisations calling for a Khanapur bandh to protest the Police Inspector's suspension. Deputy CM DK Shivakumar and Home Minister G Parameshwara held a meeting of police officers in Belagavi.

Talking to reporters, Parameshwara said, "The matter of CT Ravi was not discussed in the meeting. The case is currently being investigated by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). When the matter is being investigated, I won't make any comments."

"The decision to suspend Manjunath Nayak was taken by the senior officers of the department. The government will not interfere in the matter in any eventuality," he maintained. Deputy CM Shivakumar had slammed the BJP leaders for holding a meeting in the Khanapur police station
– IANS

Does drinking 8 litres of water daily boost health?

CLAIM: Drinking 8 litres of water daily boosts athletic performance, speeds up muscle recovery, improves joint mobility, and lowers the risk of injuries.
FACT: False. Drinking 8 litres of water daily is not universally beneficial and can even pose health risks. While adequate hydration is essential for athletic performance and recovery, excessive water intake can lead to water intoxication or hyponatremia, which can have severe consequences.

Firstcheck.in

A YouTube reel posted by the account @RahulBadsera claims that drinking 8 litres of water daily boosts athletic performance, speeds up muscle recovery, improves joint mobility, and lowers the risk of injuries. The post has more than 1,23,00 views and thousands of likes.

"When I tell people that I drink 8 litres of water every day, they have a shocking expression," says the influencer, adding that he always carries a 1.2 litre water bottle, and drinks two bottles of water during a workout.

However, First Check found that while staying hydrated is beneficial to health, consuming excessive amounts of water can be harmful. Water requirements of the body vary based on factors like body weight, physical activity, climate, and overall health. "The '8 litres of water daily' rule is a misconception and doesn't apply to everyone. For most individuals, 3 to 4 litres of water per day is sufficient," Suhlya Manzoor, a New Delhi-based nutritionist told First Check.

Manzoor emphasized that excessive water consumption could dilute the body's sodium levels, causing hyponatremia, a condition which can lead to nausea, headaches, confusion, and in severe cases, seizures.

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"Drinking water during workouts is safe and necessary, but it should be consumed in moderation," she said. "Athletes can benefit from electrolyte-rich drinks to replenish minerals lost through sweat." Studies indicate that both overhydration and underhydration—if sufficiently severe—will impair performance and pose a risk to health. A research highlights overhydration, particularly in athletes, can lead to hyponatremia. Another study found that hydration strategies tailored to individual needs, such as body weight and activity level, yield the most beneficial results for athletes.

There is no evidence that drinking excessive water directly improves joint mobility or reduces the risk of injuries. "Joint mobility depends on factors like joint health, muscle strength, and flexibility, rather than water intake," Manzoor noted. So, while staying hydrated is vital, the claim that drinking 8 litres of water daily offers these specific benefits is false, exaggerated and unsupported by scientific evidence.

The story was originally published by Firstcheck.in (https://firstcheck.in/fact-check-does-drinking-8-litres-of-water-daily-boost-health/ and republished by Bangalore Mirror as part of the Shakti Collective)

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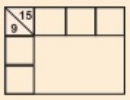
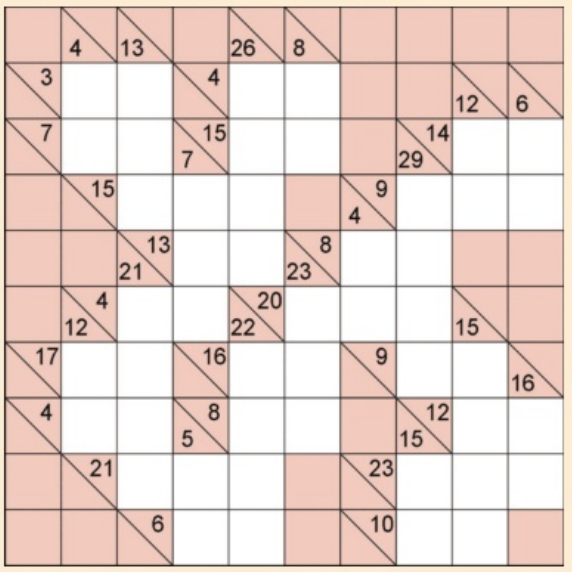
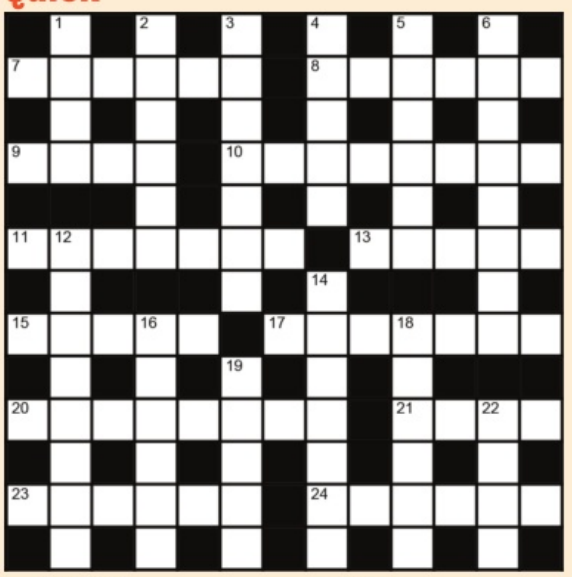


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 A French cake (6)
8 Sloping type (6)
9 Cab (4)
10 Spilling the beans (8)
11 Obtain by coaxing (7)
13 A timepiece (5)
15 Ten million, in our country? (5)
17 More appetizing (7)
20 Of or for the treatment of patients (8)
21 Her basilica is located in Shivajinagar (4)
23 Of or pertaining to the eye (6)
24 Ebbing or reducing in intensity (6)

DOWN

1 Festive occasion (4)
2 Make purer (6)
3 Find fault with; bicker or nag (7)
4 Last (5)
5 Frolic or caper (6)
6 Zenith (8)
12 __ ___ story/ story of someone's misfortune? (4,4)
14 Rolls about in mud? (7)
16 Irritate (6)
18 Domesticating or training (6)
19 Twenty (5)
22 Circular band (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: T EQUALS H

TI CFSX ZGCMDQH MGCJ ZGY-DHI ETC AYSRIH LGDQDLDHJ.

Linemaro

I'd climb the entire wall just to get your digits, girl

Mindchow

Don't wait for the storm to pass; learn to dance in the rain

Joke of the day

The midget fortune teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large

Loop

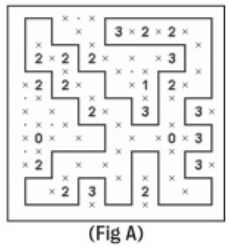
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

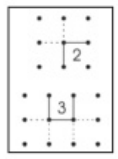
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

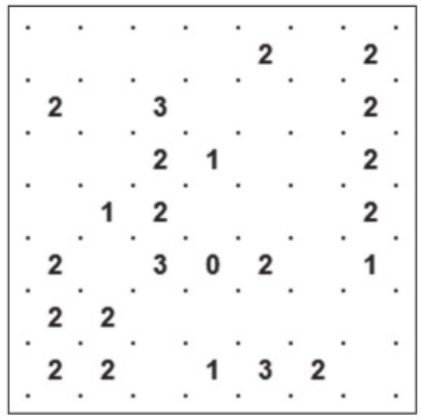
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



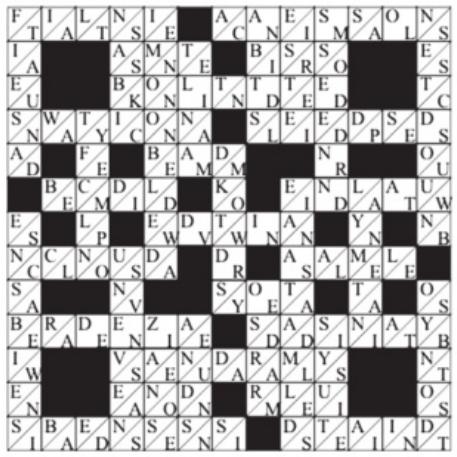
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				T
9				

ACROSS

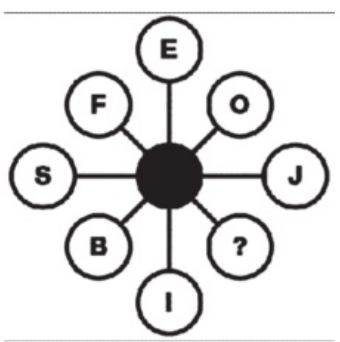
1 Rasta; 6 Maine; 7 Jag an; 8 Coast; 9 Suits

DOWN

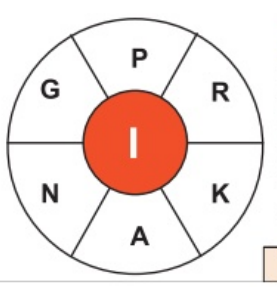
1 Rag as; 2 Masai; 3 C tint; 4 Juno a; 5 Asset

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the sequence?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

15 Average; 17 Good; 19 Outstanding

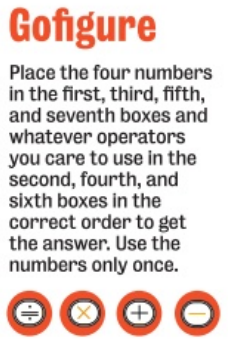
SudokuChallenge

	5		7			4		
		4	2					1
	7	8			4		6	
4			6	5	8			2
3			9	7	1			6
	6		4			5	8	
7					9	1		
		2			7		9	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy = 11

2 3 4 8

Medium = 8

1 1 4 4

Hard = 4

2 8 9 3

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

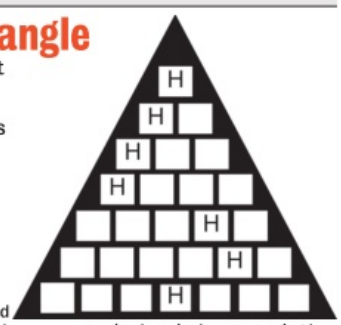
Differences: 1. Arm is longer. 2. Purse is longer. 3. Skirt is longer. 4. Chair is wider. 5. Blinds are different. 6. Hat is different.

Riddler

What does this mean? lainws

Alpha triangle

1 Planck's constant
2 Coll. greeting
3 The Hin HMS
4 'Billboard' listings
5 Vision
6 Leg parts
7 Loftiest

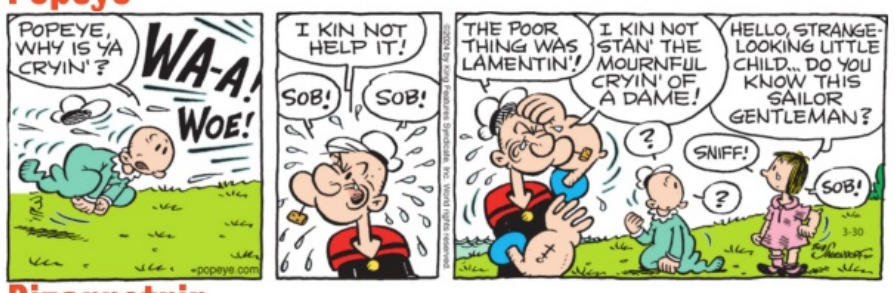


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

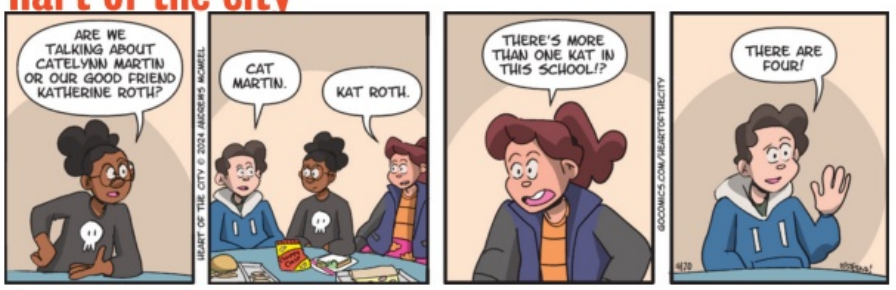
Popeye



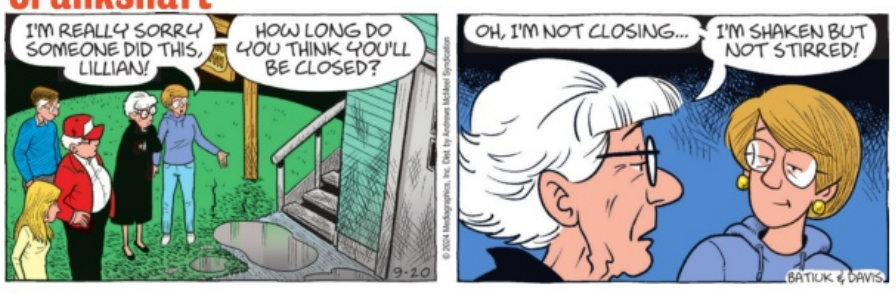
Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city


ARE WE TALKING ABOUT CATELYNN MARTIN OR OUR GOOD FRIEND KATHERINE ROTH?
CAT MARTIN.
KAT ROTH.
THERE'S MORE THAN ONE KAT IN THIS SCHOOL!?
THERE ARE FOUR!
HART OF THE CITY © 2024 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft


I'M REALLY SORRY SOMEONE DID THIS, LILLIAN!
HOW LONG DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BE CLOSED?
OH, I'M NOT CLOSING...
I'M SHAKEN BUT NOT STIRRED!
9-20
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, spirituality might uplift you. You may help the needy, donate to charity, and feel supported by divine energy in challenging situations. Students will enjoy in-depth studies, and you may find interest in the occult sciences too.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today is confusing. Hidden fears may trouble you today, leading to unease and distrust. Meditation and prayers can bring relief. Blessings from elders in the evening may help resolve mental turmoil and restore calm.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today you may expect a short business trip or rewards for your achievements. Your respect among peers may increase. Job seekers in management roles could find success. Singles may get engaged, and good news from siblings is likely.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, Jupiter's blessings bring wisdom and the ability to handle tough situations. Helping others and offering advice to family or friends may elevate your standing. You are advised to watch out for domestic tensions with your spouse.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today is not a very good day. Mood swings and health concerns could slow you down. It is advised that you avoid rash driving and unnecessary expenditures to maintain financial and physical well-being.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you are advised to postpone decisions about relocating or business investments. However, situations might stabilise by evening, with guidance from elders helping to manage challenges effectively.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today is a good day. Happiness fills your day, with harmony in domestic life and romantic moments with your spouse. Family support enables important professional decisions. New ventures or partnerships might emerge.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today is a positive day, with a boost in patience and job performance, possibly leading to incentives or rewards. Health concerns within the family improve, job seekers may find opportunities, and lovebirds will enjoy their time together.

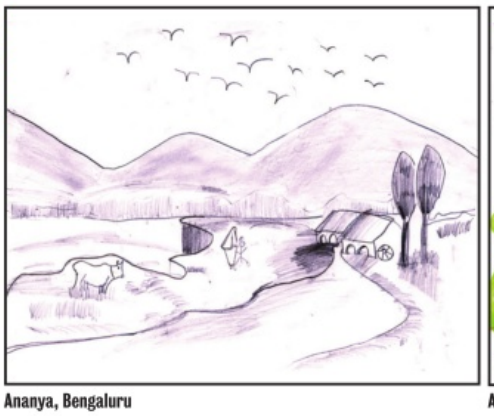
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, mixed experiences dominate your day. It is advised that you avoid keeping high expectations from others to prevent disappointment. Self-reflection helps you gain confidence and prepare for future challenges.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, a sense of detachment may impact your responsibilities. Avoid overspending on unnecessary items to prevent negativity at home or work. Stay cautious of rivals and review documents thoroughly before signing.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, elders' blessings bring happiness and financial growth. Past losses turn into gains, and you may plan investments for your children's future. You may enjoy delicious food as you may have relief from throat, teeth, or ear issues.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Patience and focus define your day today. Parents' health improves, and time spent with elders enriches your life. Meeting an influential person may aid your career. Romantic moments with your loved ones enhance domestic harmony.

KIDZONE



Ananya, Bengaluru

Akhilesh S, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M [√/24+1] √/25

RIDDLER In-laws. The word in is found inside the word laws.

FAST FIVE

S	I	T	U	S
A	S	C	O	T
G	A	N	J	A
A	M	I	N	E
R	A	T	A	S

QUOTE UNCODE
He only profits from praise who values criticism.

STRIKE OUT

F	A	L	S	E	S	A	N	I	M	A	L	S		E
	A		E	N	D	M	L	I		O				N
	I		V	A	N	D	A	L	S					N
	B	R	E	E	Z	E	D	A	I	N	T	Y		
	A		N		Y	E	T		A		S			
	C	L	O	U	D		R		S	A	M	E		
	S		P		E	D	W	I	N		Y		N	
		E	M	I	L		O		I	N	L	A	W	
	A		E		B	A	D		R				O	
N	A	T	I	O	N		S	E	E	D	E	D		
	A		N	T		I	S	O		E				
	U		K	N	I	T	T	E	D			T		
	L		F		I		N		M		N			
T	A	X	I		B	L	A	B	B	I	N	G		
		N		B		L		O		A				
W	H	E	E	D	L	E		C	L	O	C	K		
		A			E		W				L			
C	R	O	R	E		T	A	S	T	I	E	R		
	L				A		S		L					
C	L	I	N	I	C	A	L		M	A	R	Y		
	U		K		O		O		I			I		
O	C	U	L	A	R		W	A	N	I	N	G		
	K		E		E		S		G		G			
G		R		O		F		G		P				

QUICK

2	5	1	7	9	6	4	3	8
6	3	4	2	8	5	9	7	1
9	7	8	1	3	4	2	6	5
4	9	7	6	5	8	3	1	2
8	1	6	3	4	2	7	5	9
3	2	5	9	7	1	8	4	6
1	6	9	4	2	3	5	8	7
7	8	3	5	6	9	1	2	4
5	4	2	8	1	7	6	9	3

SUDOKU

K. The sum of the letters in the three adjacent circles on each side of the diagram is always 30.

MENSA PUZZLE

akin, aping, gain, grain, grin, grip, king, pain, pair, paring, PARKING, ping, pink, prig, rain, raking, raping, ring, rink

BULL'S EYE

GO FIGURE
Easy
2 − 3 + 4 + 8 = 11
Medium
4 + 4 / 1 × 1 = 8
Hard
2 + 3 + 8 − 9 = 4

ALPHA TRIANGLE
H, Hi, His, Hits, Sight, Thighs, Highest.

LOOP

KAKURO

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 # Rs 2 crore to stampede victim's family
Actor Allu Arjun, makers of 'Pushpa' announce Rs 2 crore financial aid for family of stampede victim

IN MEMORIES

Malaika opens up on celebrating Xmas in shadow of grief

Every year, Malaika Arora celebrates Christmas at her mother, Joyce Polycarp's home in Bandra. It's been a tradition that the family has followed for many years now. This year, though, the mood is sombre, as Malaika lost her father, Anil Mehta, in September. Malaika shares, "It's very difficult for me to talk about Christmas this year. We didn't want to do anything, but we all know that dad would have wanted some Christmas cheer at home. So, mom will just cook his favourite dishes for a close set of people. This year, we will celebrate the festival in his remembrance. It's a difficult phase for us as a family, and we will deal with it together."

Soon after her father's demise, Malaika returned to work, hoping that it would help her divert her mind. "Dad's passing away was very shocking. Everybody has a different way of coping with grief and loss. Luckily, we are all there with our mother; she's probably the strongest woman on earth, and we get our strength from her. I tried getting back to work because everybody said it's the best way to heal, but I found it tough initially. It was difficult to meet people and maintain a tough exterior. Eventually, I did get back to work, but only after I felt I was in a better headspace. After all, you will never be able to completely deal with such a loss. People will assume a lot of things and comment on social media. It's sad that some people said, 'Oh, she bounced back so soon', but they don't know that as a public figure, you have certain commitments, and you have to put up some posts," she shares.

—Onkar Kulkarni, ETimes

This thriller hits different

Director Vijay Karthikeya has done an excellent job of keeping the screenplay crisp. The movie has done away with sentimental, romantic, and comedy elements but the director has tried to make the film interesting. Though the movie takes its own time in the pre-intermission session to gain momentum, the apt narration of the screenplay keeps the audiences on the edges of their seats.

The movie is a treat for Sudeep's fans. Sudeep gives opportunities to other actors to share screen space while carrying the move on his shoulders. The movie is quite different from Sudeep's earlier movies and it transports the audiences to a different world. It is about incidents that take place in one night.

The movie begins with two youths in an inebriated condition injuring a few policemen who are on duty. Arjun Mahakshay aka Max (Sudeep), who is set to join duty after serving suspension, arrests the two youths. Max comes to know that two youths are a minister's sons. Later, the two youths were found dead in the police station. It is assumed that they killed themselves while quarrelling over a petty issue. Max tries to shift mortal remains of the youth to another place to save the policemen. Meanwhile, the minister asks Roopa (Varalakshmi Sharathkumar), a police inspector (crime), to get his sons released from the police station.

MAX
3.5 RATING ★★★½☆
- **DIRECTOR** Vijay Kartikeyaa
- **ACTORS** Sudeep, Varalakshmi Sharathkumar, Sunil, Pramod Shetty, Samyuktha Hornad, Sukrutha Wagle
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 132 minutes

The more Roopa tries to get the two youths released from the police station the more Max makes it tough for her. You have to watch the movie to know what happens to Max and how he teaches a lesson to politicians and the corrupt police inspector, including the police commissioner.

As far as the performances of the actors are concerned, Sudeep is at his best. His dialogue delivery and gestures, especially in the climax scene deserve appreciation and are a treat for his fans. Varalakshmi Sharathkumar is convincing as a shrewd, intelligent, and corrupt police officer. Samyukta Hornad and Sukrutha Wagle have acted well as police constables. Sunil fails to impress as a villain. Tamil actor Ilavarasu walks away with all honours for his sterling performance. He is convincing as a sincere police constable, concerned husband and an affectionate father. Ugram Manju plays a different role while Pramod Shetty makes a brief appearance.

Music director Ajaneesh Lokanath has done an excellent job. Background score adds value to this movie.

It is worth a watch for those who crave action-oriented movies.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

New avatar

Actress Pooja Hegde says her character in the upcoming film "Retro" starring Suriya has a piece of her heart.

It was on Christmas on Wednesday, when the actors took to their respective social media accounts to announce the title of the gangster drama.

Suriya took to X, formerly called Twitter, where he shared the title teaser and wrote: "Merry Christmas Dear All #Retro Summer 2025. Meet you all soon!@karthiksubbaraj @hegdepooja @C_I_N_E_M_A_A @Music_Santhosh @kshreyaas (sic)."

Pooja took to her Instagram, where she shared the link of the teaser and wrote: "This character has a piece of my heart. #RETRO A love story on adrenaline".

The film was earlier called Suriya 44 as it marks the actor's 44th movie.

The two-minute teaser gives a peep into the gritty world of "Retro". It starts with the two actors sitting on the banks of a ghat. Essaying the role of a village girl, Pooja, who played Suriya's love interest, ties a sacred band around his wrist. .

—IANS

Blake Lively's suit: Amber Heard calls social media 'horrifying'

Amber Heard has spoken out following the bombshell allegations made by actress Blake Lively against Justin Baldoni, her co-star and director on 'It Ends With Us'.

Lively's complaint accuses Baldoni of sexual harassment and engaging in a coordinated effort to smear her reputation.

In her statement obtained by The Hollywood Reporter, the 37-year-old actress, who now resides in Spain,

commented on the challenges of public perception, especially when it comes to the power of social media. "Social media is the absolute personification of the classic saying 'A lie travels halfway around the world before truth can get its boots on.' I saw this firsthand and up close. It's as horrifying as it is destructive," Heard shared.

—ANI